

ABSTRACT

A continuous mixer (32) is disclosed which can be used for mixing of incoming product streams (22, 24) of different characteristics respectively to yield a final product stream (26) of predetermined, consistent characteristics. The mixer (32) includes an elongated housing (42) having a pair of product input ports (50, 52) and an output (64), with a pair of elongated, axially rotatable, mixing screws (44, 46) located within the housing (42). The screws (44, 46) include a series of outwardly projecting mixing elements (114) preferably of pyramidal design and arrayed in a helical pattern along the length of the screws (44,46). The mixer (32) may be used in a processing system (20,200) having individual product lines (28, 30, 204, 206) coupled to the mixer (32), and is especially useful for processing of incoming meat streams (22, 24) of different fat/lean ratios, to give a final comminuted output stream (26) of an intermediate and essentially constant fat/lean ratio. Preferably, the product lines (204, 206) are each equipped with a combined preblender and pumping device (202, 272).